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My Witness Journal

to accompany

Witness

Exploring and Sharing Your Christian Faith

Dr. Ronald K. Crandall

THE GENERAL BOARD OF DISCIPLESHIP
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Sponsored by the Foundation for Evangelism and the General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church

THE GENERAL BOARD OF
DISCIPLESHIP
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Foundation for Evangelism and the evangelism staff of the General Board of Discipleship have been in conversation, prayer, and development of this study for more than three years. We hope that you will share in our excitement and commitment to exploring and sharing the Christian faith.

For information about *Witness:* www.gbod.org/witness

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Contents

Journaling: Some Encouraging Words From Wadi

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

Session 2—Biblical Images of God's Purpose, Vista One
Session 3—Biblical Images of God's Purpose, Vista Two
Session 4—The Human Problem: Sin
Session 5—God as the Evangelist

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Session 6—Jesus as Prophet-Teacher
Session 7—Jesus as Son of Man and Son of God
Session 8—Jesus as Messiah, King, and God
Session 9—Jesus as Savior, Lord, and Friend

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Session 10—Spirit of the Holy Trinity
Session 11—Spirit of Creation and New Creation
Session 12—Spirit of Amazing Grace
Session 13—Spirit of Ministry and Witness

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

Session 14—Biblical Images of the Church
Session 15—The Church as Evangelist
Session 16—The Great Commission
Session 17—A Disciple-Making Fellowship
Session 18—Our Witness in Our Community
Session 19—Our Witness in Today's World

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

Session 20—My Witness and Christ's Presence
Session 21—My Witness and Prayer
Session 22—My Witness as My Story
Session 23—My Witness as God's Story, Vista One
Session 24—My Witness as God's Story, Vista Two
Session 25—Partners With God

Journaling:
Some Encouraging Words From Wadi

Ten years ago I moved to London, England, to study English and philosophy at the University of London. About a week before I flew from Los Angeles across the world, my mom told me that I should keep a journal of all my adventures overseas—they would be important to me later in life. So I trusted my mother and began to develop a habit that I have carried with me through many heartaches, adventures, and changes in character. The first words I wrote in my journal were, "They drive on the wrong side of the street; what are they thinking?" These words began my search to understand life around me, to understand myself, and to understand God.

I began carrying an 8-by-14 black sketchbook. I weave sketches, photos, and poetry; write down the dreams I remember in the morning; research history and people; and record insights I have about life and about God. By keeping a journal, I am able to work through, question, and many times vent without hurting or attacking others. I am able to write letters to God; to think through arguments with others; to record goals, irritations, fears, and early memories. My journal has become a melting pot to reflect who I am and to record the process of who I am growing to be.

There is much of our lives that is worth remembering. I have traveled throughout our country and explored cultures overseas, living in different environments and situations that have helped grow me and mold me. Relationships have come and gone. My journal is a touchstone to those memories, keeping them alive when the people have moved on with their lives.

I don't have the friends to reminisce with and keep my experiences and adventures fresh. It is my journal that keeps my past alive. It is exciting to look back and see how it felt just two years ago when I first met Emma (Llama) on the trail. I am now getting ready to marry her. I have our meeting and courtship, and will have our marriage, documented for our children and grandchildren.

You do not need writing talent to begin. Journaling is simply a tool to help you focus on what is going on in your life and to reflect on it. Journaling helps you think about what you would like to see happen in your life, what you would like to become. Every day there are thoughts and ideas that come across your mind; but in the rush of life and activity, there is not usually time to dig into and give the time necessary to process them. Setting time aside to write gives a place and a space to allow you to finish contemplating the things of importance. This time for journaling is an important time for me to fully think through the struggles of life and to consciously give them to God. The more time you spend writing, the more time you give for moments of hidden wisdom to surface or for insights you were not aware of to manifest themselves.

The words *journal* and *diary* both mean daily, but there is no reason why it must be done so. A journal is a tool to serve you in your life, not the other way around. A journal's purpose is to enrich your life, to add to it, not bring guilt if missed days stack up. Journaling is not another chore to add to an already busy life. Over the years my style has grown, and I have learned how to make the most out of journaling. It has molded and adapted to what is of value for me. Writing is a habit, and habits can be built.

Sometimes my journal is a letter to myself to make concrete my spiritual experiences. There are things that God has shown me and told me that I did not understand at the time. I had convictions that were strong in the emotional moments of life. I needed hard evidence when doubt rose up to stare me in the eye, doubt that God had said things and promises God had given.

A friend who writes prolifically told me that after she completes each journal, she takes it into her backyard and burns it in a trash can. She doesn't want anyone to know her, to know her secret of what a horrible person she thinks she is. I hurt when I see what she feels and does. This woman is growing and maturing, and her journals are a pencil-line sketched on a doorpost to show that each year she is not the same woman she was the year before.

I do not look forward to the day my children read my heart, but I know that they will be proud to see what challenges in life I gained

victory over. They will see the details of my life in the 1990's, and they will know what my understanding of world events was. Then they will have many laughs as they see how my immaturity played many jokes on me.

In my quiet time there are emotions and feelings that I have had to work through as I learned valuable lessons in life. From the depth of despair of broken friendships to the joy of discovering my passions in life, I have scratched them out on paper. They are preserved forever—mental snapshots recording the things that naturally have a tendency to fade over time.

No matter the length of time I have been writing, it is still a struggle to settle myself down to get started. I still struggle to write more than just events. I struggle to record my inner self, which is more important than my outer life. Everyone's life is of value and is worth recording. Everyone's life is as interesting as any great novel.

Use a journal to express.

Perfectionism is not the key to writing.

Self-expression is the key!

Wadi

Ken Evans, who hiked the Appalachian Trail as a thru-hiker from April 4 through October 10 of 1999 and signed his journal entries as Wadi, now lives in Ellensburg, Washington, where he is the director of college ministries at the Ellensburg Christian and Missionary Alliance Church.

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

Biblical Images of God's Purpose—Vista One

Record your observations of God's purpose.

Day 1: Genesis 1:26-31 (Creation)

Then God said, "Let us make _____

humankind in our image, _____

according to our likeness..." _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Exodus 3:1-12 (Moses before God)

Moses was keeping the flock _____

of his father-in-law... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Isaiah 58:1-12 (God's word to Israel)

Shout out, do not hold back! _____

Lift up your voice... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Matthew 5:1-20 (Jesus' teachings)

When Jesus saw the crowds...

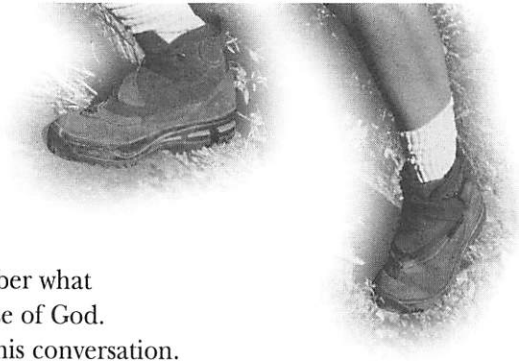
Day 5: Luke 4 (Jesus in Galilee)

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit,
returned from the Jordan and
was led by the Spirit...

Day 6: Ephesians 3 (Paul's prayer)

This is the reason that I Paul
am a prisoner for Christ Jesus
for the sake of you Gentiles...

Action Assignment



Ask a friend, coworker, or family member what he or she thinks is the ultimate purpose of God. Write notes about your insights from this conversation.

Preparing for Session

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

Biblical Images of God's Purpose—Vista Two

Record your observations of God's purpose.

Day 1: John 17 (eternal life)

After Jesus had spoken these _____

words, he looked up to _____

heaven and said, "Father, _____

the hour has come..." _____

_____

_____

Day 2: Jeremiah 31:31-34 (the new covenant)

The days are surely coming, _____

says the LORD... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Ezekiel 36:22-32 (the new covenant)

Therefore say to the _____

house of Israel, Thus _____

says the Lord GOD... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: 2 Corinthians 3 (the glory of God)

Are we beginning to _____

commend ourselves... _____

Day 5: Matthew 6:19-33 (the Kingdom)

Do not store up for yourselves _____

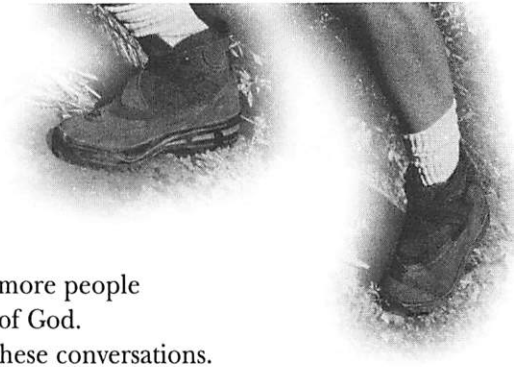
treasures on earth... _____

Day 6: Matthew 13:44-58 (the Kingdom)

The kingdom of heaven _____

is like treasure hidden... _____

Action Assignment



As you did last week, ask two or three more people how they would describe the purpose of God. Write notes about your insights from these conversations.

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

The Human Problem: Sin

Record your observations of sin.

Day 1: Genesis 3:1-4 (original sin)

Now the serpent was more crafty...

Day 2: Proverbs 3 (wisdom versus foolishness)

My child, do not

forget my teaching...

Day 3: Ezekiel 18 (turning from righteousness)

The word of the

LORD came to me...

Day 4: Matthew 9 (forgiveness as a healing)

And after getting into a _____

boat he crossed the sea... _____

Day 5: Romans 5–6 (sin, death, and life)

Therefore, since we _____

are justified by faith,... _____

Day 6: 1 John 1 and 3 (sin in contrast to love)

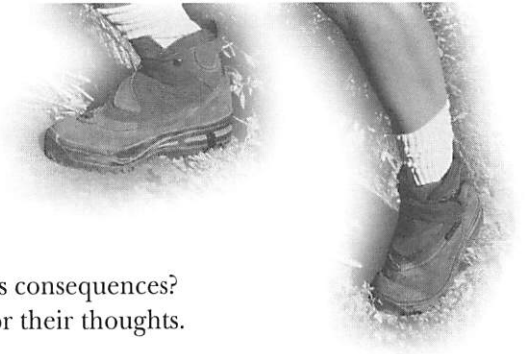
We declare to you what was _____

from the beginning... _____

See what love the Father _____

has given us... _____

Action Assignment



How would you define sin? What are its consequences? Ask at least two friends or coworkers for their thoughts.

Preparing for Session

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

God as the Evangelist

Record your observations of these images of God.

Day 1: Genesis 12:1-9 (God evangelizes.)

Now the LORD said to _____

Abram, "Go..." _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Exodus 3:7–4:20 (God accompanies.)

Then the LORD said, "I have _____

observed the misery of my _____

people...and I have _____

come down..." _____

_____

_____

Day 3: Isaiah 55 (God sends the word.)

Ho, everyone who thirsts, _____

come to the waters... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Hosea 2:13–3:5 (God courts the beloved.)

I will punish her...and _____

speak tenderly to her.... _____

Day 5: Mark 1:1-39 (Jesus declares his mission.)

The beginning of the good _____

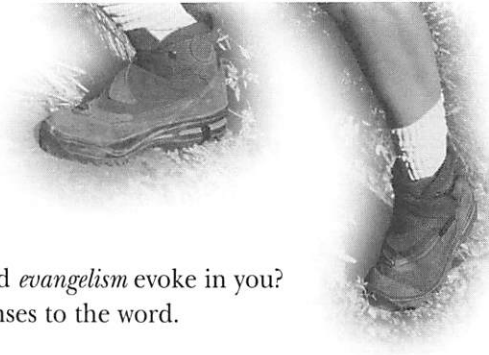
news of Jesus Christ... _____

Day 6: John 4:1-42 (Jesus evangelizes.)

Now when Jesus learned that _____

the Pharisees had heard... _____

Action Assignment



What images and feelings does the word *evangelism* evoke in you? Ask two or three others for their responses to the word.

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Jesus as Prophet-Teacher

Record your observations of Jesus as a prophet and a teacher.

Day 1: Ecclesiastes 12 (the Teacher and Truth)

Remember your creator _____

in the days of your youth... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Luke 2:21-40 (a prophet's prophecy)

After eight days had passed,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Mark 6:1-16 (a prophet's hometown)

He left that place and _____

came to his hometown... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Matthew 22 (challenging the Teacher)

Once more Jesus spoke to _____

them in parables... _____

Day 5: John 3:1-10 (two teachers)

Now there was a Pharisee _____

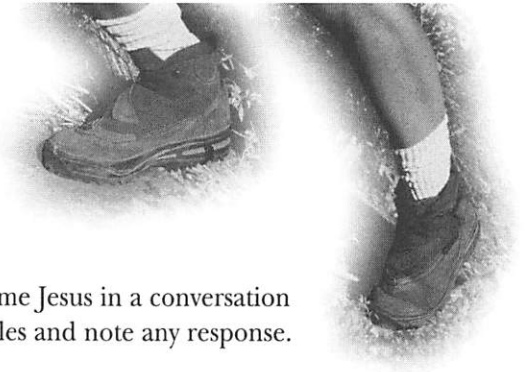
named Nicodemus... _____

Day 6: John 13:1-17 (the Teacher's example)

Now before the festival _____

of the Passover,... _____

Action Assignment



At least once this week mention the name Jesus in a conversation with someone outside your church circles and note any response.

Preparing for Session

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Jesus as Son of Man and Son of God

Record your observations of the Son of Man and the Son of God.

Day 1: Matthew 8 (many titles, take your pick)

When Jesus had come down _____

from the mountain,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Luke 19:1-10 (why the Son of Man came)

He entered Jericho and _____

was passing through it.... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Mark 10:32-45 (what the Son of Man must do)

They were on the road, _____

going up to Jerusalem,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 1:1-18 (the word of God made flesh)

In the beginning was the Word,...

Day 5: Philippians 2:1-11 (Christ Jesus in the form of God)

If then there is any
encouragement in Christ,...

Day 6: Colossians 1:1-20 ("the image of the invisible God")

Paul, an apostle of Christ
Jesus by the will of God,...

Action Assignment

During the week ask at least one person,
"Have you ever really wondered who Jesus is?"

Preparing for Session

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Jesus as Messiah, King, and God

Record your observations of these images.

Day 1: Matthew 1:1–2:15 (the Messiah's arrival)

An account of the genealogy _____

of Jesus the Messiah... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: John 1:19-51 (recognizing the Messiah)

This is the testimony _____

given by John... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Luke 24:1-35 (the risen Christ Jesus clarifies)

But on the first day of the week,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Deuteronomy 17:14-20 (qualities of God's true King)

When you have come _____

into the land that the LORD _____

your God is giving you,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 5: John 18:33–19:22 (King of the Jews)

Then Pilate entered _____

the headquarters _____

again, summoned _____

Jesus, and asked... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 6: Revelation 19:1-16 ("King of kings and Lord of lords")

After this I heard what _____

seemed to be the loud voice _____

of a great multitude... _____

_____

_____

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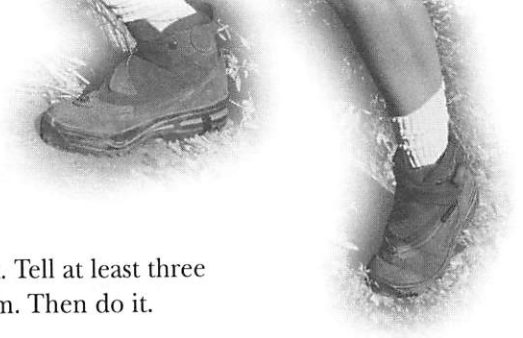
Action Assignment



Listen to hear people's needs this week. Tell at least three people that you will be praying for them. Then do it.

Name _____

Need _____

Name _____

Need _____

Name _____

Need _____

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Jesus as Savior, Lord, and Friend

Record your observations of Jesus from these readings.

Day 1: John 3:1-21 ("born from above")

Now there was a Pharisee _____

named Nicodemus… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Luke 7:36-50 (Which one loves more?)

One of the Pharisees asked _____

Jesus to eat with him… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Matthew 7:1-28 (saying, "Lord, Lord")

Do not judge, so that you _____

may not be judged…. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 15:1-17 (branches and friends)

I am the true vine, and my _____

Father is the vinegrower.... _____

Day 5: Romans 9:27–10:13 (your lips and your heart)

And Isaiah cries out _____

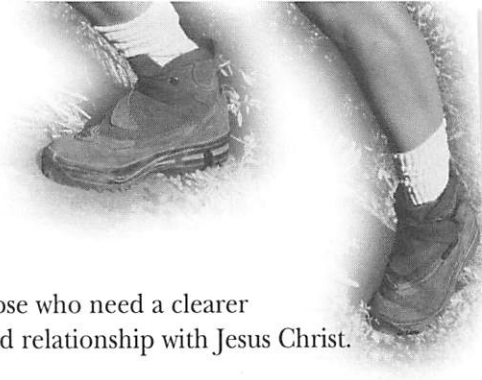
concerning Israel... _____

Day 6: Ephesians 2 (by grace through faith)

You were dead through _____

the trespasses and sins in _____

which you once lived... _____



Action Assignment

Prayerfully let the Spirit lead you to those who need a clearer understanding of and a more faith-filled relationship with Jesus Christ. Pray for them daily.

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Preparing for Session

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Spirit of the Holy Trinity

Record your observations of the Spirit from these passages.

Day 1: Matthew 3 (three at a baptism—Spirit of God, Father, Beloved Son)

In those days John the _____

Baptist appeared... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: John 14 (three in an upper room—Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

Do not let your _____

hearts be troubled.... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Luke 24:36-53 (three at a resurrection—Messiah, Father, Power from on high)

While they were talking _____

about this, Jesus himself _____

stood among them... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Acts 15:1-29 (three in the church's life—God, Holy Spirit, Lord)

Then certain individuals _____

came down from Judea _____

and were teaching... _____

Day 5: Romans 8:1-17 (three in one Spirit—Spirit, Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ)

There is therefore now no _____

condemnation for those _____

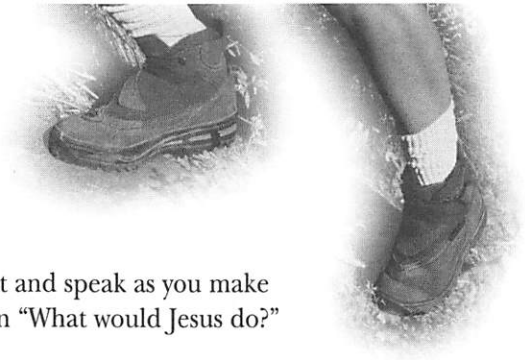
who are in Christ Jesus.... _____

Day 6: 1 John 4 (three in one God of love—Son, Father, Spirit)

Beloved, do not believe every _____

spirit, but test the spirits... _____

Action Assignment



Prayerfully let the Spirit lead you to act and speak as you make friends for God. Pray daily the question "What would Jesus do?"

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Name _____ Special Concern _____

Notes _____

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Spirit of Creation and New Creation

Record your observations of God's Spirit.

Day 1: Exodus 35:30–36:38 (the Spirit of creativity and giftedness)

Then Moses said _____

to the Israelites… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: 2 Corinthians 5 (the Spirit of the new creation)

For we know that if the earthly _____

tent we live in is destroyed,… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: John 16:1-15 (the Spirit as advocate for truth)

I have said these things to you _____

to keep you from stumbling…. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: 1 Corinthians 2 (the Spirit and the mind of Christ)

When I came to you, _____

brothers and sisters,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 5: Romans 8 (the Spirit of our new life)

There is therefore now no _____

condemnation for those who _____

are in Christ Jesus.... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 6: 2 Corinthians 3 (the Spirit of the new covenant and freedom)

Are we beginning to commend _____

ourselves again?... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Action Assignment

Prayerfully let the Spirit melt, mold, fill, and use you this week.

Melt what? _____

Notes _____

Mold what? _____

Notes _____

Fill with what? _____

Notes _____

Special prayer for

_____

_____

_____

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Spirit of Amazing Grace

Record your observations of God's amazing grace.

Day 1: Isaiah 45 ("though you do not know me")

Thus says the LORD to his _____

anointed, to Cyrus,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Jeremiah 31 ("grace in the wilderness")

At that time, says the _____

LORD, I will be the God _____

of all the families... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Zechariah 3:1–4:7 (a vision of grace)

Then he showed me the _____

high priest Joshua... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Romans 2:29–3:26 (justified by his grace through faith)

Rather, a person is a Jew _____

who is one inwardly... _____

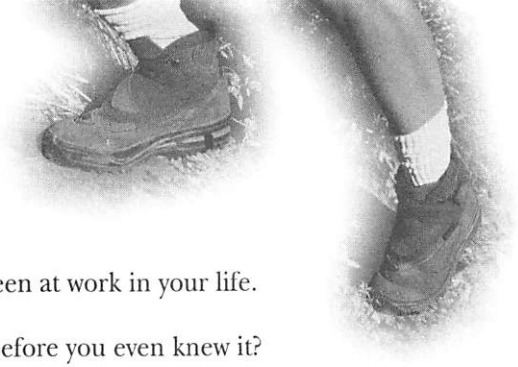
Day 5: Galatians 2:15–3:14 ("the promise of the Spirit through faith")

We ourselves are Jews by birth... _____

Day 6: Galatians 5 (called by the Spirit, live by the Spirit)

For freedom Christ has set us _____

free. Stand firm, therefore,... _____



Action Assignment

Prayerfully review how the Spirit has been at work in your life.

Where was the Spirit working for you before you even knew it?

Notes _____

_____

_____

How did the Spirit lead you to saving grace through faith?

Notes _____

_____

_____

What has the Spirit done to change you into a new creation?

Notes _____

_____

_____

Continue in special prayer for and witness to

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Name _____ Notes _____

_____

Preparing for Session

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Spirit of Ministry and Witness

Record your observations of ministry and witness.

Day 1: 1 Corinthians 12–13 (many spiritual gifts, one body)

Now concerning spiritual _____

gifts, brothers and sisters,… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Ephesians 4:1-16 (gifts to equip the saints for the work of ministry)

I therefore, the prisoner in _____

the Lord, beg you to lead a _____

life worthy of the calling… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Isaiah 51:1-11 ("The coastlands wait.")

Listen to me, you that _____

pursue righteousness,… _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Matthew 5:1-16 ("You are the light of the world.")

When Jesus saw the crowds,

he went up the mountain...

Day 5: 1 Thessalonians 2:1-13 (entrusted with the gospel)

You yourselves know, brothers

and sisters, that our coming

to you was not in vain...

Day 6: Hebrews 12:1-13 (discipline for running the race)

Therefore, since we are

surrounded by so great a

cloud of witnesses,...

Action Assignment

Prayerfully and in conversation with others review how the Spirit has shaped you.

Spiritual gift. What might your spiritual gifts be?

Notes _____

Heart. Where is your heart most stirred by the needs you see?

Notes _____

Aptitudes. What talents and abilities have you been given?

Notes _____

Personality. What are some of your dominant personality traits?

Notes _____

Experiences. What life experiences have helped you understand special problems?

Notes _____

How does this SHAPE picture clarify your gifts, calling, ministry, and witness?

Notes _____

_____

(Permission was granted for the use of the SHAPE acronym, written by Rick Warren, Saddleback Church, in this publication only. No further permission is given.)

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Does this exercise lead you to others?

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

Reviewing Trails One, Two, and Three

Record your experiences from the first three trails.

Trail One: Exploring God's Purpose

Which Bible passages were most important to you on Trail One?

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

What action exercise was most helpful?

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

Trail Two: Up the Mountain With Jesus

Which Bible passages were most important to you on Trail Two?

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

What action exercise was most helpful?

Why? _____

Trail Three: Into Life in the Holy Spirit

Which Bible passages were most important to you on Trail Three?

Text _____ Why? _____

Text _____ Why? _____

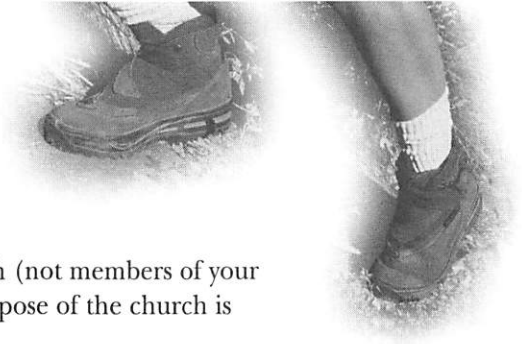
Text _____ Why? _____

What action exercise was most helpful?

Why? _____

What other reflections do you have from your experience during the first twelve weeks on the trails?

Action Assignment



Ask two or more people in your church (not members of your *Witness* group) what they think the purpose of the church is (why it exists).

Person One _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Person Two _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Notes

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Preparing for Session

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

The Church as Evangelist

Record your observations as you read these passages.

Day 1: Isaiah 43:1-12 ("You are my witnesses.")

But now thus says the LORD, _____

he who created you,… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Luke 5:1-11 (Follow me and catch people.)

Once while Jesus was standing _____

beside the lake of Gennesaret,… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Matthew 9:35–10:32 (The disciples are sent out with instructions.)

Then Jesus went about all _____

the cities and villages… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 10:1-16 ("I have other sheep.")

Very truly, I tell you, _____

anyone who does not enter _____

the sheepfold by the gate... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 5: Acts 2 (All of us are witnesses.)

When the day of _____

Pentecost had come,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 6: 1 Thessalonians 1 ("The word of the Lord has sounded forth from you.")

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, _____

To the church... _____

_____

_____

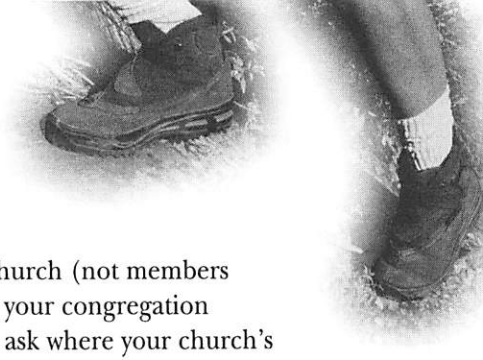
_____

_____

_____

_____

Action Assignment



Ask at least two other people in your church (not members of your *Witness* group) what they think your congregation does best in witnessing for Christ. Also ask where your church's witness needs to be strengthened.

What we do best

Where we need work

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Preparing for Session

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

The Great Commission

Record your thoughts about the church's work.

Day 1: Matthew 28:16-20 ("Make disciples of all nations.")

Now the eleven disciples _____

went to Galilee... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Mark 16:14-20 ("Proclaim the good news to the whole creation.")

Later he appeared to _____

the eleven themselves... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Luke 24:44-49 (Proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sins.)

Then he said to them, _____

"These are my words..." _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 20:19-23 ("As the Father has sent me, so I send you.")

When it was evening _____

on that day,... _____

Day 5: Acts 1:1-8 ("You will be my witnesses.")

In the first book, Theophilus, _____

I wrote about all that _____

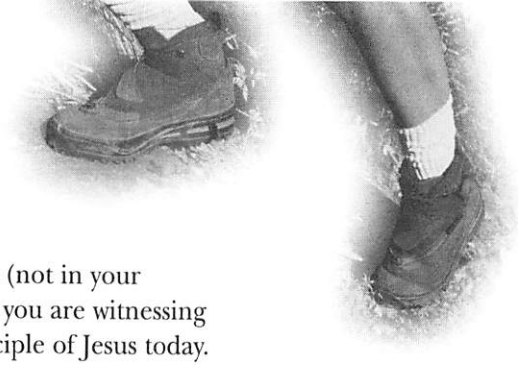
Jesus did and taught... _____

Day 6: Ephesians 3 (Paul declares his commission to the Gentiles.)

This is the reason that I Paul _____

am a prisoner for Christ Jesus... _____

Action Assignment



Ask at least one person in your church (not in your *Witness* group) and at least one person you are witnessing to what they think it means to be a disciple of Jesus today.

What is a disciple? (Their answers)

What is a disciple? (Your answer)

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

A Disciple-Making Fellowship

Record your thoughts about disciple-making.

Day 1: Romans 14 ("Let all be fully convinced in their own minds.")

Welcome those who are _____

weak in faith… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: 1 John 1:1–2:25 (Let all live in fellowship with God.)

We declare to you what _____

was from the beginning… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: John 13:1-35 (My disciples love one another.)

Now before the festival _____

of the Passover,… _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 8:25-36 (My disciples "continue in my word.")

They said to him, _____

"Who are you?"... _____

Day 5: Luke 14:25-35 (My disciples count the cost and bear their cross.)

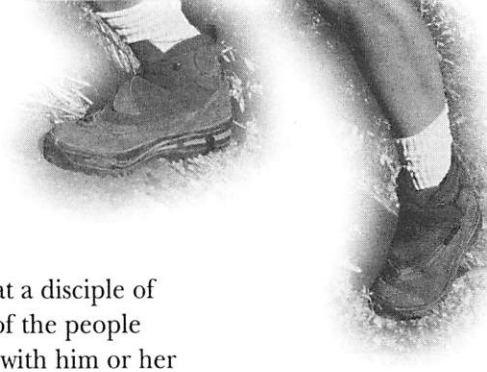
Now large crowds were _____

traveling with him... _____

Day 6: John 15:1-16 (My disciples "bear much fruit.")

I am the true vine, and my _____

Father is the vinegrower.... _____



Action Assignment

Formulate your own description of what a disciple of Jesus looks like. Then ask at least one of the people you contacted last week if you can talk with him or her and get some feedback.

What will be the key features you emphasize?

What was their response?

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

Our Witness in Our Community

Record your insights about the witness of your congregation.

Day 1: Mark 10:13-16 (the children)

People were bringing _____

little children to him... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Matthew 9 (the broken, sick, and sorrowing)

And after getting into a _____

boat he crossed the sea... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Matthew 8:5-13; John 19:31-42 (leaders open to faith)

When he entered Capernaum, _____

a centurion came to him... _____

Since it was the day of _____

Preparation, the Jews... _____

_____

_____

Day 4: Mark 6:31-44 (the crowds)

He said to them, "Come

away to a deserted place..."

Day 5: Acts 16:6-15 (seekers and their households)

They went through the region

of Phrygia and Galatia...

Day 6: Acts 17 (the curious and receptive)

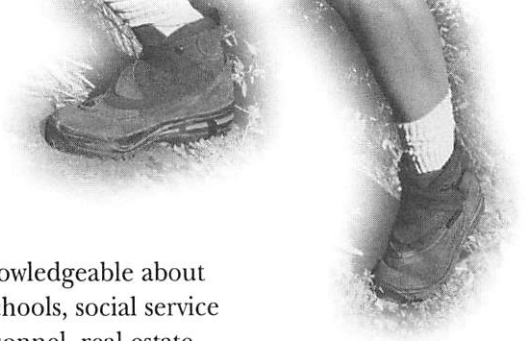
After Paul and Silas had

passed through Amphipolis

and Apollonia, they came

to Thessalonica...

Action Assignment



Select one or more people who are knowledgeable about your community (those who work in schools, social service organizations, volunteers, medical personnel, real estate people, and so forth). Ask these two questions.

What are the biggest problems you see in our community today?

What could a church that wanted to help do?

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

Our Witness in Today's World

Record your thoughts about these Scriptures and your witness.

Day 1: Psalm 67 ("Let the nations be glad.")

May God be gracious _____

to us and bless us... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Acts 6:1-7 (Unity overcomes cultural distance.)

Now during those days, _____

when the disciples were _____

increasing in number, the _____

Hellenists complained... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Acts 8 (out to the Samaritans—Who?)

And Saul approved of their _____

killing him. That day a _____

severe persecution began... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Acts 10 (the great conversion of the big fisherman—What?)

In Caesarea there was a _____

man named Cornelius... _____

Day 5: Acts 15 (the first missionary council—Why?)

Then certain individuals _____

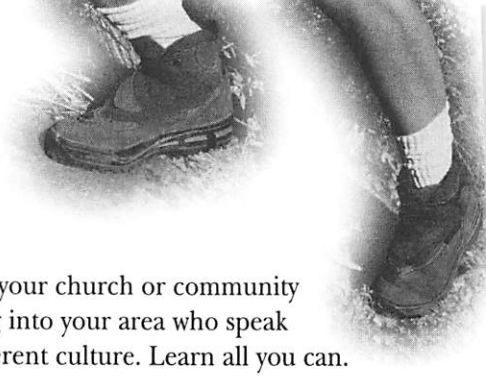
came down from Judea... _____

Day 6: 1 Corinthians 9:1-22 (that I might save some—How?)

Am I not free? _____

Am I not an apostle?... _____

Action Assignment



One—Ask someone knowledgeable in your church or community what new people or groups are moving into your area who speak another language or come from a different culture. Learn all you can.

Two—Seek out and have a good conversation with someone from a cultural group or generation with which you have little familiarity. What did you learn?

Three—Become acquainted with a missionary and his or her work. Pray daily for Christ to be glorified in that person's work and in yours.

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Preparing for Session

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

My Witness and Christ's Presence

Record your observations as you read these passages.

Day 1: 1 Peter 3:15-16a (sanctifying Christ in your heart—Memorize these verses.)

In your hearts sanctify _____

Christ as Lord...with _____

gentleness and reverence. _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: John 15:5-11 (abiding in Christ—Memorize verse 5.)

I am the vine, you _____

are the branches.... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Galatians 2:20 (Christ living in you—Memorize this verse.)

It is no longer I who live, but _____

it is Christ who lives in me.... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Philippians 3:8-17 (our highest priority: knowing Christ)

More than that, I regard _____

everything as loss because _____

of the surpassing value _____

of knowing Christ... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 5: Ephesians 3:14-21 (our ultimate goal: "the fullness of God")

For this reason I bow my _____

knees before the Father... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 6: Romans 12:1-2 (our ongoing need: the renewing of our minds)

I appeal to you therefore, _____

brothers and sisters,... _____

_____

_____

_____

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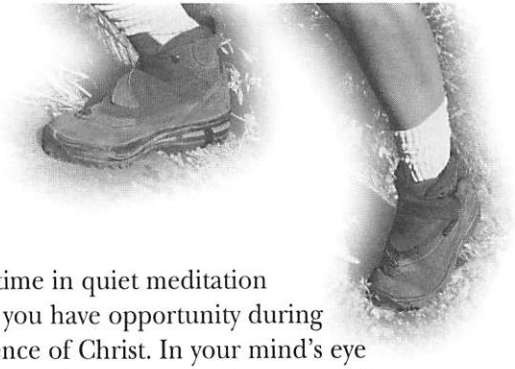
_____

_____

Action Assignment



One—Each day this week spend some time in quiet meditation (as part of your devotions or whenever you have opportunity during the day) picturing yourself in the presence of Christ. In your mind's eye see yourself with him and listen to whatever he says to you about your life in him and his life in you. Record your thoughts below.

Two—Prayerfully listen this week to the Spirit's leading and (1) invite someone to church and offer to provide a ride, or (2) seek to have a meaningful conversation with someone about his or her spiritual life and your discoveries of the new life in Christ. Summarize the outcome below.

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

My Witness and Prayer

Record your insights about prayer as you read these Scriptures.

Day 1: Matthew 7:7-11 (Prayer as asking, seeking, knocking.—Memorize verses 7-8.)

Ask, and it will be given you... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-25 ("Pray without ceasing."—Memorize verses 16-18.)

Rejoice always, pray without _____

ceasing, give thanks _____

in all circumstances... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Romans 10:1-15 (Pray for the salvation of others.—Memorize verse 1.)

Brothers and sisters, my _____

heart's desire and prayer _____

to God for them is... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: Matthew 9:37-38 (Pray for laborers in the harvest.)

Then he said to his disciples,...

Day 5: 2 Corinthians 13:9b; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (Pray for the ultimate objective.)

This is what we pray for,...

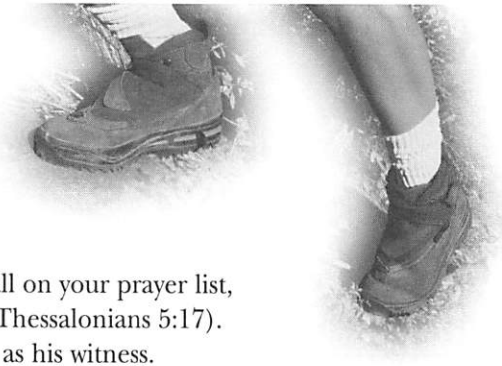
To this end we always pray...

Day 6: Philemon 1:6 (Pray for one another as witnesses.)

I pray that the sharing of

your faith may become...

Action Assignment



One—Pray Ephesians 3:18-19 daily for all on your prayer list, and whenever you have opportunity (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Listen carefully to Christ's word for you as his witness. Record your thoughts here in your journal.

Two—Prayerfully follow the Spirit's leading and (1) have a follow-up conversation with the one who came to church with you, or (2) invite someone to come to church with you, or (3) tell someone about one or more of the verses you've memorized and explain the implications for how you are living in this world. Summarize the outcome below.

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

My Witness as My Story

Record your thoughts about your own story as a witness.

Day 1: Psalm 77 (Sometimes God seems silent and far away.—Memorize verse 2.)

I cry aloud to God, _____

aloud to God, that _____

he may hear me.... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: *Psalm 107* ("Let the redeemed of the LORD say so."—Memorize verse 2.)

O give thanks to the _____

LORD, for he is good... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: John 8:2-11 (Sometimes we can't believe God could forgive us.—Memorize verses 10-11.)

Early in the morning he _____

came again to the temple.... _____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 9:1-38 (No one else can tell our story.—Memorize verse 25b.)

As he walked along, he saw _____

a man blind from birth.... _____

Day 5: 2 Timothy 1:1-14 (Sometimes our story involves generations.—Memorize verses 5-7.)

Paul, an apostle of Christ _____

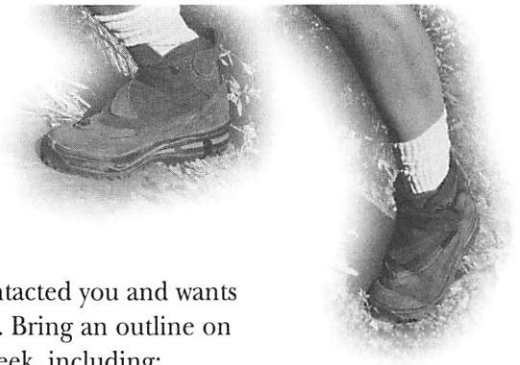
Jesus by the will of God,... _____

Day 6: Acts 25:1–26:29 (Our story is part of God's story.—Note 26:16-18.)

Three days after Festus had _____

arrived in the province... _____

Action Assignment



One—Imagine that a publisher has contacted you and wants to publish your spiritual autobiography. Bring an outline on a single sheet of paper with you next week, including:

(1) Your **title** (be creative; stimulate interest);
(2) A **dedication** (one paragraph acknowledging people who have contributed to your faith);
(3) A list of 6 to 8 **chapter titles** important to your story;
(4) A **closing word of encouragement** (one paragraph) for others like you who may sometimes struggle with their faith and faithfulness.

Two—Prayerfully follow the Spirit's leading for (1) follow-up conversations, (2) inviting someone to church, and (3) telling your story to another person. Summarize your experiences below.

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Preparing for Session

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

My Witness as God's Story—Vista One

Record any thoughts or insights from your reading.

Day 1: Micah 6:6-8 (what God requires of us—Memorize verse 8.)

With what shall I come _____

before the LORD... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Romans 6:21-23 (life or death? wages or free gift?—Memorize verse 23.)

So what advantage _____

did you then get... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: John 10 (why Jesus came—Memorize verse 10b.)

Very truly, I tell you,... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: John 3:16-17 (the gospel in two verses—Memorize these verses.)

For God so loved the world _____

that he gave his only Son... _____

Day 5: Ephesians 2:1-10 (It's all about grace.—Memorize verses 8-10.)

You were dead through _____

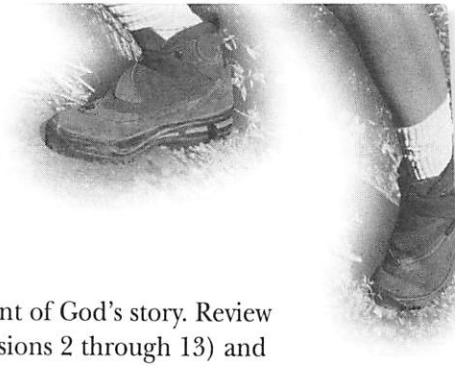
the trespasses and sins... _____

Day 6: Acts 2:36-39 (What must we do?—Memorize verses 38-39.)

Therefore let the entire house _____

of Israel know with certainty... _____

Action Assignment



One—This week we work on the content of God's story. Review Scripture passages (especially from Sessions 2 through 13) and record below some of the texts that best help you clarify each category.

God's Purpose: _____; _____; _____; _____;
_____; _____; _____; _____

Our Problem: _____; _____; _____; _____;
_____; _____; _____; _____

God's Provision: _____; _____; _____; _____;
_____; _____; _____; _____

Our Response: _____; _____; _____; _____;
_____; _____; _____; _____

Two—Interview at least one person (unchurched or churched, but not in your *Witness* group). Ask for his or her answers to these four foundational elements of the gospel. Summarize their answers.

God's Purpose: _____
_____

Our Problem: _____
_____

God's Provision: _____
_____

Our Response: _____
_____

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

My Witness as God's Story—Vista Two

Record your thoughts and insights as you read the Scriptures.

Day 1: 1 Peter 2:24-25 (the gospel summary—Memorize these verses.)

He himself bore our sins in his _____

body on the cross, so that... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 2: Matthew 6:19-21 (the heart check—Memorize these verses.)

Do not store up for yourselves _____

treasures on earth... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 3: Romans 5:1-5 (grace for the journey—Memorize these verses.)

Therefore, since we are _____

justified by faith, we have... _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Day 4: 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (the Spirit's transforming work—Memorize these verses.)

Now the Lord is the _____

Spirit, and where the _____

Spirit of the Lord is,... _____

Day 5: 1 John 3:14-24 (signs of new life—Memorize verse 14.)

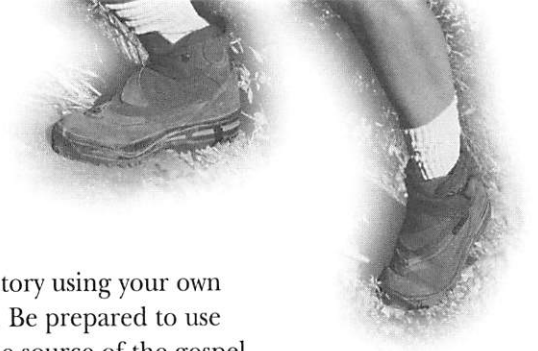
We know that we have passed _____

from death to life because... _____

Day 6: Philemon 1:6 (motivation for effective faith sharing—Memorize this verse.)

I pray that the sharing of your _____

faith may become effective... _____



Action Assignment

One—Be prepared to roleplay God's story using your own model or one from last week's session. Be prepared to use at least two verses from Scripture as the source of the gospel. Indicate here the approach you will take.

_____

_____

What Bible verses will you use? _____; _____; _____;

_____; _____; _____

Two—Each day become familiar with one of the following biblical stories of God's saving grace. Tell others who face similar challenges about the truth and hope the stories illustrate.

David—Grace is real, even in the face of deceit, murder, and adultery (2 Samuel 11:1–12:25; Psalm 51).

The Astrologers—God can use all of creation to lead true seekers to Christ (Matthew 2:1-12).

The Woman at the Well—Hearts broken by repeated failure in relationships can find hope (John 4:1-42).

Mary and Martha—The good can get in the way of the best (Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1–12:8).

Zacchaeus—Jesus loves and restores those who step on people to get to the top (Luke 19:1-10).

The Adulteress—When we are most vulnerable, our sins made public, Jesus forgives (John 8:1-11).

What other biblical stories of hope come to mind?

_____

_____

_____

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.

Trail Five: **My Life as Christ's Witness**

Looking Back With a View to the Future

Record your experiences from the last two trails.

Trail Four: The Church and Its Witness

Which Bible passages were most important to you on Trail Four?

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

What action exercise was most helpful?

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

Trail Five: My Life as Christ's Witness

Which Bible passages were most important to you on Trail Five?

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

Text _____ Why? _____

_____

What action exercise was most helpful?

_____

Why? _____

_____

_____

Looking Back Over the Trails

Name four things you've discovered about God and the gospel.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Name four things you've discovered about being a witness.

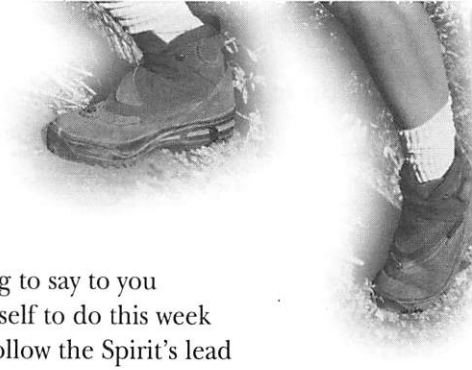
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Name four changes you want to help bring to your church.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Name four areas in your life as a witness where you still need help.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____



Action Assignment

You're on your own. What is God trying to say to you these days? What will you commit yourself to do this week to demonstrate that you are ready to follow the Spirit's lead as a living witness?

Keep praying for and witnessing to those previously identified.